

New Orleans, and that is how I got to know him. Robert was never an agenda journalist. And we know that those journalists, particularly in the print media, exist, and they exist in the electronic media.

I couldn't tell you today what Robert's politics are. I don't even know what party he is in. I don't know if he is in a party. He was always, when he was a reporter, a straight shooter. He called it like he saw it. He played it straight down the middle. And if he thought he ought to bust you upside the head because you did something dumb in public service, he would do it, but he didn't do it just in a gratuitous way.

So it was no surprise to me when PAR asked Robert to take over running the Public Affairs Research Council. And he did that. He has done it since 2011, 10 years. Robert and PAR have contributed so much to my State.

His replacement is going to be a gentleman by the name of Dr. Steve Procopio, who I know as well. Steve is going to do a great job. But we are going to miss Robert. I hope he doesn't go far.

I just wanted to come say a word about my good friend Robert Travis Scott.

TAX CODE

Madam President, now let me say one final word on a timely topic here.

As you know, our body is going to soon be considering, I think, some changes to our Tax Code. We don't know exactly what they are.

I just want to strongly encourage my colleagues and my friends—because I like everybody in this body—if we are going to make changes to our Tax Code, to make those changes on the basis of sound economic principles. Don't make them on the basis of class warfare.

Some of the proponents of some of the changes that I have seen discussed in the media, in my opinion, don't understand the complexity of the American economy. They just don't. They think of our economy as it was in primitive times, when our ancestors were hunters and gatherers.

In those days, in primitive times, when our ancestors were hunters and gatherers, the only value that was created in the economy that we had was labor. It was all labor. And then, in those days, when somebody became rich, they became rich by exploiting the capital of others.

In fact, that is what Marx talked about. Marx's concept of the economy was that the only value in an economy is work. And if you become wealthy in an economy, you become wealthy as a result of exploiting the labor of others.

So Marx agreed with this description of the—I want to say our medieval, but it was way before medieval times, when our ancestors were hunters and gatherers.

That is not the American economy today. The American economy today is the greatest economy in all of human

history because it is a marriage of capital and labor.

And capital and labor are not antagonistic. They work together. Now, it is not without friction. I understand that. But that is why we have become the greatest economy in all of human history. And when capital joins labor and the two contribute and play their own role, we are able to all work and save and invest and fund the research and development and do the innovative things that have given all of us the greatest quality of life in all of human history. So capital is not a bad thing; it is a good thing.

And there has been a lot of talk around here about billionaires—bad, bad billionaires; they are not paying their fair share. I have never completely understood how you determine what the fair share is of somebody.

Let me put it another way. I don't understand what the fair share is of what somebody else has worked for. I don't know what my fair share is of what Madam President's—what she has worked for. It is yours. You worked for it.

But that aside, this talk about the bad, bad billionaires and they don't pay their fair share and they are hurting our economy and they only got rich based on exploiting other people's labor, I think, shows a gross misunderstanding of the complexity of the U.S. economy and a gross misunderstanding of free enterprise. And I hope we don't lose sight of that as we go about the process of making changes to our Tax Code.

Let me say it again. If we make changes to our Tax Code, let's don't make them on the basis of class warfare. Let's make them on the basis of sound economic principles.

So congratulations to Robert Travis Scott from PAR. Robert, I hope you have a wonderful retirement. Don't be moving back to South Carolina or Baltimore or other places. Stay in Louisiana.

And, Mike, I miss you. Mike Enzi, I miss you.

I have heard it said before that—I didn't say this, now; I am just repeating it—most Senators believe in God, and the rest of them think they are God. Mike Enzi was in the former category. Just a great man. Smart, good fisherman. But most of all, he was decent.

I suggest the absence of a quorum.

The PRESIDING OFFICER. The clerk will call the roll.

The bill clerk proceeded to call the roll.

Mr. TOOMEY. Madam President, I ask unanimous consent that the order for the quorum call be rescinded.

The PRESIDING OFFICER. Without objection, it is so ordered.

NOMINATION OF SAULE OMAROVA

Mr. TOOMEY. Madam President, I rise today to discuss President Biden's nominee to serve as one of our Nation's chief banking regulators.

About a month ago, President Biden announced his intention to nominate

Cornell University Law Professor Saule Omarova to serve as Comptroller of the Currency.

I was on the floor recently, and I spoke about her nomination. And I noted at the time that she has been celebrated on the far left for promoting ideas that she herself has described as “radical.” It is one of the few things on which I agree with her. These are radical ideas. In fact, they are very radical ideas.

And most disturbing about this is they demonstrate—these ideas of hers—a very clear aversion to America's free enterprise system at a very fundamental level, despite the fact that our free enterprise system has produced an incredible level of prosperity and standard of living.

I have to say, I don't think I have ever seen a more radical choice for any regulatory spot in our Federal Government that I can think of than Professor Omarova. And let me be clear. That assessment is based on the things that Professor Omarova has written and said in her own words, often quite recently.

So today I want to focus on just one of the radical ideas that she presented in great detail in a paper that she wrote in 2016—not exactly ancient history. This is her plan to have the Federal Government set wages and prices for large sectors of the U.S. economy; in fact, the most important goods and services in our economy.

Under her plan, the Federal Government would designate—and these are her words—“systemically important prices and indexes” or “SIPIs.” She creates an acronym for these things; she calls them SIPIs—for the Federal Reserve to regulate.

So she details five different approaches, different ways, that the government could regulate and take control over these prices of these systemically important goods. And they are all—it is all a terrible idea based on the completely erroneous premise that somehow the government knows what the price of these things should be.

But among all of them, one that is maybe the most troubling is one that she describes here. And this is what Professor Omarova argued. She says: “The . . . final regulatory option we think worth considering is . . . price maintenance—typically within some band—through OMOs.”

Now, OMO stands for open market operations, and that is an operation that the Federal Reserve engages in. But the Fed uses open market operations—or OMOs, in Professor Omarova's lexicon—to just buy and sell securities for one purpose, and that is to manage the amount of money in the supply—in the economy, to manage monetary policy, to do it by managing the supply of money. That is it.

What Professor Omarova is advocating for is a radical departure from this very, very narrow and limited activity. What her plan would do is to empower the Fed—and these are her

words—"to buy and sell in markets . . . with a view to keeping particular [systemically important prices] within particular bands thought necessary for the purposes of maintaining systemic stability."

Wow. Now, what kind of prices does Professor Omarova have in mind for the Fed to control by buying and selling these commodities? Well, she tells us. She says:

Various candidate SIPs here come to mind. . . . Certain sensitive commodity prices—those for widely used fuels, foodstuffs, and some other raw materials, for example—constitute another class of candidates. Finally, wage or salary indices constitute yet another class of candidates.

Now, here are some of the other candidates for price controls that she has in mind: "home prices," "productive inputs" such as "energy," "certain . . . metals, and other natural resources."

In other words, like all the most important commodities in America, under Professor Omarova's radical plan, it would be the government that would set these prices rather than a free market determining how these prices should be set. The government would control everything from the size of your paycheck to the amount you pay at the grocery store for a gallon of milk or a gallon of gasoline.

There is no more allocation of scarce goods based on who values them the most—the brilliance of the way that a spontaneous market allocates resources automatically to their best and highest use and enables us to have the lowest possible cost for the most possible goods. None of that. No more.

We will have a committee—it is called the Fed Open Market Committee—and they will dictate the prices that we will pay and how the resources of America will be allocated.

Now, if her radical idea sounds familiar, that is because it is familiar. It has been tried—been tried several times—repeatedly, and every single time it has failed spectacularly, time and again, in all the centrally planned economies in the world, especially the Soviet Union.

In fact, Soviet efforts to control prices in their economy were so abysmal, they failed so badly that they spawned countless jokes within the Soviet Union that illustrate the folly of central planning, the inherent impossibility of central planning.

One of my favorites is about a guy who walks into a store. He walks up to the shopkeeper and says: You don't have any meat, do you?

And the shopkeeper replies: No, we don't have any fish. It is the store next door that doesn't have any meat.

So we can laugh about these things that people living under the misery of the Soviet Union, they had a sort of gallows humor about the misery of their circumstances.

But the fact is, it was this notion that a really smart committee at the center of the government could dictate the prices and the allocation of all resources; that idea is what caused the

misery—ultimately, of course, caused the collapse of the Soviet Union.

This is what happens anywhere where governments try to control what should be left to the free men and women in terms of allocating resources. Government-run economies, like the very one that Professor Omarova is proposing—they don't work.

And let me stress a point that I have made before about Professor Omarova. The fact that she was born and raised in the Soviet Union has absolutely nothing to do with whether or not the Senate should confirm her to run a major financial agency.

There are some unbelievably wonderful, successful, patriotic, terrific American citizens who had the misfortune of growing up behind the Iron Curtain. That has nothing to do with whether or not she is qualified for this job. It is her advocacy for the policies that, in disturbing ways, resemble those of the Soviet Union—that is what should inform our judgment about whether this person should be the chief regulator of the Nation's federally chartered banks.

Now, Professor Omarova would likely argue that her centrally planned economy would be different. That is always the case. This time we will get socialism right. As her paper notes, the Fed does already use open market operations to implement monetary policy. That is true. So why not let the Fed use a similar mechanism to set and maintain stable prices for all kinds of important assets?

Well, the answer is simple: Making decisions about what individual—maybe dozens, maybe hundreds of individual assets across something as complex as our entire economy, what they should cost, how they should be allocated, that is an impossibly complex endeavor. There is no technocrat, no bureau, no committee, no agency—there is no entity that can figure that out.

It is the organic decisions, individual decisions, of millions of free people that spontaneously create the allocation that maximizes the well-being of the people of a free society.

By the way, there is a pretty strong case to be made that the government doesn't do such a great job on monetary policy either. People that we have serious doubts about how well they set the price of a single thing—namely, the U.S. dollar—do we want them directly controlling the prices of everything or at least everything that is important? I think not.

So the more I read the radical ideas that Professor Omarova has advocated for and the more I think about the damage this would do to our economy and our society, the more troubled I am by her nomination. So I strongly urge President Biden to reconsider his nomination, his decision to nominate her.

THE ECONOMY

Madam President, I have one other topic I want to address this afternoon,

and it has to do with this really extraordinary and very reckless tax-and-spending spree that our Democratic colleagues seem determined to attempt to pass.

Now, there has been a lot of focus, understandably, on the staggering size of this, right? Is this going to be the \$3.5 trillion of the budget resolution that passed here and is that a compromise from \$6 trillion that some of our Democratic colleagues preferred or 7 trillion—or will it be 1.5 or 2?

OK. I would just say that there is no doubt in my mind, wherever this ends up, if it ends up anywhere, it is going to do a lot of damage. It is going to do a lot of damage to our economy. And I think that is probably why there are significant reservations, even among Democrats, and there is not any support among any Republicans for the various iterations of this bill.

At the heart of it, what this bill does is several things, but one of them is to attempt to redefine the very role of the Federal Government in our society. And what I am referring to is the attempt to have the Federal Government provide the needs—like all kinds of basic needs, so basically anyone in the middle class—from cradle to grave. It is free pre-K, free childcare, free paid leave, free community college—oh, maybe that one got dropped. I mean, many of them aren't even means-tested. They are not meant to be means-tested. If they are, you can have many multiples of the median family income and still qualify. It is all about making the middle class dependent on government. What a terrible idea.

But I will have more to say on another occasion about the idea of putting the entire middle class on the dole. Instead, I want to focus for a minute on a particularly ill-conceived provision on the tax side of this because it has massive tax increases as part of this proposal. And one of them is the huge increase in the U.S. global minimum tax. When we did tax reform of 2017 and brought about the end of corporate inversions, among other things, we established a global minimum tax at a low rate of 10 percent.

Now, what the Biden administration is proposing is going to completely upend the tax reform of 2017. We probably all remember the big announcements about this international agreement on multinational taxation. It consists of two pillars, as you may recall.

Pillar 1 is this unprecedented change that would allow foreign countries to tax American companies based on the sales of the American companies into the foreign country. We have never had a tax policy based on that. You could tax the income of a company that is based in your country; you don't get to reach into the income of a company based in some other country.

Many of our allies and friends around the world have long wanted to grab some income tax from American companies, and American administrations